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# CITY OF BOSTON.

## SPOT POND.

*In the Board of Aldermen, Sept.* 8, 1845.

Read, laid upon the table, and ordered to be printed.

Attest, S. F. McCleary, *City Clerk.*

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*In the Board of Aldermen, Sept.* 8, 1845.

The Special Committee to whom was referred the Petition of Robert G. Shaw and ninety-nine others, requesting that the following proposition may be submitted to the citizens in their respective wards: "Shall the immediate introduction of pure water be secured by requesting the City Government to subscribe for the remaining third of the capital of the Spot Pond Aqueduct Company, with liberty to take the whole on the completion of the work, pursuant to the Charter?" having duly considered the subject, ask leave to

REPORT:

That the whole subject of introducing an abundant supply of pure, soft water into the City of Boston, is

one that has for many years past engrossed much of the public attention, and there has never been but one opinion in regard to its almost absolute necessity; for indeed from the scantiness of our present supply, as well as from its general impure quality, no person, having a suitable regard to the public necessities, can for a moment entertain a doubt. These necessities are the providing suitably for the maintenance of good health, for supplying the domestic wants, and for a constant and abundant supply of water for the extinguishment of fires.

The only hesitancy that has ever been expressed, is from what foreign source, and in what manner, and at whose expense the water shall be introduced. The question seems finally to have resolved itself into this: Shall the City bring in the waters of Spot Pond or Long Pond, at its own expense, or shall the City, in its corporate capacity, be simply a stockholder of such portion of capital stock as will give it a predominant influence in the general management of the whole concern.

Since this subject has agitated the public mind, no expense on the part of the city has been spared, that the exigency of the case or the pressing public necessities require, to investigate fully the various sources of supply, the different modes of introduction, and of ascertaining as near as circumstances admit, the probable amount of expenditure requisite for bringing in and distributing to the inhabitants an abundant and never failing supply of pure soft water.

Competent and scientific Engineers have in different years, and at various seasons of the year, been employed to make surveys of the sources and the feasibility of certain routes.

Able chemists have analysed the various waters, and given us the results of their analyses; and the results have been as nearly similar as might reasonably be expected. For wherein can they vary? Spot Pond and Long Pond, the two most available sources, are where they ever have been; their elevations, their superficial areas, their capabilities for supply, and the purity of their waters have not, nor indeed can they of themselves, materially change.

In 1825, Professor Treadwell, under direction of the City Government, made a survey of the waters of Spot Pond; and in his Report he states "that a sufficient supply of water for the city may be brought from Spot Pond in common, and even in dry seasons." R. H. Eddy, Civil Engineer, surveyed this source for the city in 1836. He states in his Report: "I shall feel safe in estimating this pond capable of supplying 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 gallons per day." And again, "as the consumption increases more or less, the balance would be supplied from Mystic Pond; but no expenditure on that account would be necessary for many years;" and by statements recently made by Messrs. Treadwell and Eddy, we learn that their opinions upon this subject remain unchanged.

Messrs. Hale, Baldwin, and Treadwell surveyed this pond in 1837, and again were required by the city in 1838, to review their work, and in their Report say, "we feel bound to adhere to the opinion expressed in our former report, in favor of adopting the system of works, relying upon Spot and Mystic Ponds as the source of supply."

The estimated expense of bringing the waters of Long Pond into the city, are in the opinion of the late Water Commissioners, Messrs. Hale, Jackson and Baldwin, about $1,400,000, while on the other hand, the cost of introducing the waters of Spot Pond, of far purer quality, and adequate to meet all the wants of the citizens for many years to come, are estimated to cost about 500,000 dollars.

There is no doubt in regard to the practicability of both routes, and the adequateness of the supply, at least for many years; and it does appear to us that the only consideration now worthy of attention on the part of the citizens, is from which of the two sources, Spot Pond or Long Pond, can the supply be introduced at the least expense; for it is a matter of little moment, whether a body of individuals, incorporated for this express purpose, or whether the city bring it in. In the first place, if brought in by a special corporation, the consumer pays directly to the proprietors for the use of the water. But if

brought in by the city, who pays the expense? Why, the tax-payer certainly. The valuation of this city the present year is 135,388,900 dollars, of which 81,697,200 is in real estate. A large amount of this class of property belongs comparatively to a few individuals. Their taxes would be very materially increased by the additional burden which would thus be imposed upon the city.

Where would these capitalists naturally seek a return for their outlays? Most assuredly at the hands of their tenants. So the poor tenant, at last, by an increase of his yearly rents, will find that he is, though indirectly, contributing his proportion of the expense.

In relation to the present condition of the "Spot Pond Aqueduct Company," we would briefly remark that a Report from the Executive Committee to the subscribers to the stock, has been placed in our hands, from which we learn that two-thirds of the half million of dollars, the whole amount of the capital stock has been already taken, and is distributed among a list of more than three hundred individuals, averaging about ten shares each. On this list we notice the names of many of our most respectable and wealthy citizens; and as a manifestation of their confidence in the project, four gentlemen have subscribed for $20,000 each; and we regard as an additional mark of approval, and the public estimation in which this work is held, the fact that the one hundred persons, the Committee of the Shareholders, who signed the petition now before us, are the owners and representatives of about 8,000,000 dollars worth of property. Surely a very natural inference from this is that there is unlimited confidence in the quality and quantity of the water—the economy of the measure, and its adaptedness to meet the wants of the community.

One other fact of great importance as we deem it, is stated in the Report referred to,—"that a disposition exists on the part of contractors, and the ancient proprietors of Spot Pond, to receive the shares at par, to a considerable extent in payment for the source, materials, and construction."

In conclusion, we beg leave to state that the City

Council did in 1843, sanction by an almost unanimous vote, the introduction of the waters of Spot Pond, and we can see no reason why that sentiment should not obtain at the present time. We do believe that a large portion of the citizens would be very reluctant to plunge the city into a great and unnecessary debt to introduce a supply from Long Pond, far greater than the wants of the community do at present, or will for a long series of years require.

If pure soft water is to be brought into the city, let it be done at once. Sufficient data are already before the people. Spot Pond has been surveyed three several times, under the direction of the City Government, within the last twenty years; and is it generally known that the ponds in the vicinity of Boston are again at great expense undergoing a survey of Engineers from abroad?

Should the proposition made by the petitioners be at once submitted to the people, and they deem it best to advise the City Council to subscribe for the remaining third of the stock, the enterprise may be commenced this season, and within one year a pure and abundant supply of water may be introduced into our city. The Committee therefore recommend the passage of the following order.

For the Committee,

J. CULLEN AYER.

*Ordered*, That the citizens of the respective wards be notified to meet at their several ward rooms on Wednesday the day of September, inst., at 12 o'clock, at noon, then and there to give their ballots for or against the following

PROPOSITION:

Shall the immediate introduction of pure water be secured by requesting the City Government to subscribe for the remaining third of the capital of the Spot Pond Aqueduct Company, with the liberty to take the whole on the completion of the work, pursuant to the charter.

# PETITION

OF THE

# STOCKHOLDERS OF SPOT POND AQUEDUCT COMPANY.

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To the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Boston.

Whereas two thirds of the Capital of the Spot Pond Aqueduct Company have been subscribed, and a portion of the subscribers by their circular of May last pledged themselves to apply to the Legislature for certain amendments of their Charter, specified below, and to offer to the City a portion of the Capital, the subscribers to the Stock respectfully request you to submit to the Citizens of Boston, in their respective wards, as soon as may be, the following proposition:—

"Shall the immediate introduction of pure water be secured by requesting the City Government to subscribe for the remaining third of the Capital of the Spot Pond Aqueduct Company, with liberty to take the whole on the completion of the work pursuant to the Charter."

And in case a majority of voters shall approve the same, they respectfully request the City Government, under the power conferred by the Charter, to subscribe for one third of the Stock of the Company, which has been reserved for the City.

At the next session of the Legislature, application will be made for the following amendments.

1. That the Mayor and Aldermen shall forever be, by virtue of their office, but without compensation, a Board of Water Comptrollers, whose duty it shall be to supervise the income of the Corporation, and to regulate the water rents, from time to time, so that the Stockholders shall not receive a yearly profit of less than six per cent., if the net income of the works will yield so much—nor more than ten per cent.

2. That the said Board of Water Comptrollers shall determine, from time to time, how many, and when, and where, public hydrants shall be placed in the street, for the accommodation of the poor, for the use of which an annual rent shall be paid by the City to the Corporation.

3. Said Board shall also determine how many, and when, and where, ornamental public fountains, not exceeding three, shall be placed, and the annual rent for the use of both hydrants and fountains, (if the Water Comptrollers and the Corporation cannot agree upon a price,) shall be fixed by three Commissioners, to be mutually chosen by the parties, from time to time, as occasion may require.

4. Said Board may notify the agents of the Corporation, when and where, they desire to have fire plugs inserted into the main pipes—and said Corporation shall be compelled forthwith to make such insertions at the expense of the City—but the use of the water for the suppression and extinguishment of fires, and to fill the City reservoirs, shall at all times be free, and without any expense to the City; and one or more servants of the Company shall at all times be at hand, to aid the Chief Engineer of the Fire Department.

And also a further amendment, providing that the City may elect a number of Directors proportionate to the Stock subscribed by them, by concurrent vote of the Mayor and Aldermen and Common Council, and vote on all other subjects at the meeting of the Company.

The introduction of Water by this Company has been once approved by the City Government.

The Charter of the Company has been framed to meet the suggestions and wishes of the City Goverment, and your petitioners have no doubt, that a prompt subscription on the part of the City will secure, by next year, an ample and sure supply of the purest water at a low scale of charges, and, combining the resources and credit of the City with individual frugality, enterprise and sagacity, will insure promptitude in action, and economy in expenditure, and rapid execution, and avoid all risk of increased taxation from a larger and more uncertain enterprise at the sole risk of the City.

By the concert of action proposed, the City would become at once proprietors of one third of the Stock, and and have the option of taking the whole Stock upon the completion of the enterprise.

Respectfully asking the immediate action of the Mayor and Aldermen, your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

The subscribers to the Stock of the Spot Pond Aqueduct Company, by

CALEB EDDY, *Chairman.*

S. Shaw, Jr., *Secretary.*

*Boston, August 5th,* 1845.

*Boston, August 5th*, 1845.

At a meeting of the subscribers to the Stock of the Spot Pond Aqueduct Corporation, the following vote was passed without a dissenting voice.

*Voted*, That the Petition to the City Government annexed to the Report of the Executive Committee, be adopted by the meeting, and that the same be signed, in behalf of the association, by the Chairman and Secretary, and be transmitted to the Mayor and Aldermen, by a Committee of one hundred subscribers to the Stock.

Attest, S. Shaw, Jr., *Secretary*.

To the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Boston.

The undersigned, Committee of the subscribers to the Stock of the Spot Pond Aqueduct Company, respectfully present to your Honorable Board, the petition of their associates, accompanied by the contemplated amendments of the Charter of the Spot Pond Aqueduct Company, which are designed to protect the interests of the City.

Commending the same to your favorable consideration, they are respectfully,

Robert G. Shaw,
Thomas Wigglesworth,
Cyrus Alger,
Giles Lodge,
John Ballard,
Samuel T. Armstrong,
Jonathan Chapman,
Isaac Parker, Ward 7,
Richard Urann,
Aaron Bancroft,
William Dall,
Henry K. Hancock,
Henry Farnam,
William Underwood,
Edward D. Peters,
George W. Crockett,
Z. B. Adams,
Prentiss Hobbs,
Richard Martin,
Jedediah Tuttle,
Edward Blake,
Edward A. Raymond,
Benjamin Lamson,
John Eaton,
Jabez C. Howe,
Francis Welch,
Samuel F. Coolidge,
George C. Shattuck,
James C. Merrill,
Amos Binney,
Charles Amory,
H. B. Rogers,
Henry G. Andrews,
J. A. Lowell,
Abner Phelps,
Pliny Cutler,
Samuel May,
Moses French,
Ezra Lincoln,
Stephen Fairbanks,
Ellis Gray Loring,
B. T. Reed,
Bela Hunting,
John Templeton,
Jonathan Preston,
William Lawrence,
John P. Thorndike,
John Stevens,
Deming Jarves,
Henry Edwards,
Henry Hall,
Israel Ames,
Philo S. Shelton,
F. C. Loring,
Simon Wilkinson,
John G. Torrey,
C. F. Adams,
Joseph N. Howe, Jr.
Charles Wilkins,
Samuel Johnson,
William P. Winchester, by his attorney, S. Winchester,
Wyatt Richards,
Josiah Bradlee,
Jeffrey Richardson,
Joel Thayer,
Solomon Piper,
John D. Williams,
Uriel Crocker,
Daniel Draper,
William H. Prentice,
Benjamin Humphrey,
Adin Hall,
P. P. F. Degrand,
James Cheever,
Ebenezer Smith,
Silas Pierce,
William W. Stone,
Samuel Gilbert,
Charles Stoddard,
Daniel Safford,
Frederick Gould,
William Wright,
Thaddeus Nichols,
Jabez Ellis,
John G. Roberts,
Nathaniel Faxon,
Francis O. Watts,
William F. Weld,
Henry D. Gray,
William J. Hubbard,
Royal B. Willis,
William H. Lane,
Nathaniel Hammond,
A. Perkins,
William E. Coffin,
Joseph Cotton,
Jonathan Goldsmith,
M. A. Metcalf,
H. Weld Fuller,
Henry B. Stone.

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